

*Wyllie to Capt. Dornin, November 27, 1854.*

MY DEAR SIR: It was only this day that I heard that you were to leave us so soon. I am sorry that your departure has become necessary, and having the utmost regard for you personally I am anxious that you should not retire under a wrong impression of my feeling in consequence of the communications made to me on the 11th and 12th instant.

The one hundred and fifty-seventh section of Vattel, chapter 12, book 2, is as follows:

"A treaty is valid if there be no defect in the manner in which it has been concluded; and for this purpose nothing more can be required than a sufficient power in the contracting parties, and their mutual consent sufficiently declared."

Therefore, by international law the highly confidential and delicate negotiation between Mr. Gregg and me, in progress since the 6th of February, became suspended under the coercion made known on the 11th and 12th instant.

Who is it who has seen the proclamation of the President against filibustering to Cuba, his proclamation of the 18th of January, 1854, against unlawful expeditions in the Pacific, his inaugural message, and the official declarations of preceding administrations relating to these islands in particular, that could doubt for one moment that if the President, had he heard what I heard on the 11th and 12th, he would not instantly have ordered that all negotiations should be suspended until they could be honorably resumed after every trace of coercion had been removed and the King's liberty to consent or not to consent fully and unquestionably reestablished.

The only course that I could pursue under circumstances, the parallel of which, as far as I know, is not to be found in the history of any other nation, and certainly never in the past experience of this humble Kingdom, is unmistakably designated in the above quotation of Vattel, and in Chapter XVIII, sections 200, 201, 202.

Respect to the United States Government, duty to the King and to my colleagues, and, I may add, to myself, all alike required, in the most imperative manner, that the unlawful threats of foreign intruders should be instantly met by the most determined resistance.

In less than forty-eight hours we were prepared *effectually and certainly* to put down the insurrectionary attempt that was threatened, even had it come upon us in the formidable shape in which it was represented. With the assistance kindly promised by yourself, through the Hon. David Gregg, and that which was promptly promised by others, the result of a struggle could not have been doubtful, the rights of the King would have been vindicated, and from all I have seen of the generous and merciful character of His Majesty I would venture to say that the prisoners would have experienced at his hands a clemency so much beyond what the law and usage of nations allow in such cases as would have filled them with remorse for having ever attempted and conspired to overturn his throne.

I speak in the supposition that such men can be susceptible of generous and ennobling sentiments, which, considering the designs imputed to them *where they neither had suffered nor could have suffered any wrong whatever*, may be very doubtful. Ever since I have been on these islands I have welcomed the ingress of American citizens; I have made it a rule, even in political debate, never to be wanting in personal respect to those who held diplomatic or consular commissions from the President; but I have no such feeling of respect or consideration for filibusters; and if for that I am to be blamed, then let the censure commence with the President himself, for my sentiments correspond with *his* proclamations, and so, I hope, *will* ever my acts.

In a private note like this I am forced to speak of myself only; I have no right to put words in the mouths of my colleagues, but I know them to be *at heart gentlemen* and men of honor, and if you believed them to be such in every point of their official duty to the King, you can foretell precisely what course they will pursue. I am quite sure that you, whose prompt and energetic conduct in the Peninsula of "Bassa California" will be recorded in history as one of the brightest pages, in a moral sense, of the annals of the brave American navy, can never blame those gentlemen born in your own country, who act with me as the joint depositaries of the confidence of King Kamehameha III, for uniting their efforts with mine, with the protection of God and of all the friends whom the Almighty had given to us to repel with *loathing, disgust, and indignation* all filibusters who may come among us with the insolent pretension of throwing the weight of their revolvers into the balance of our honorable deliberations.

Since the 12th you have several times remarked that I was too much excited. I beg to assure you that neither then nor since have I known any excitement whatever, beyond that of a strong indignation. As for fear, I never had one particle of it; but I can assure you that, had I yielded to such an unworthy impulse and debased myself to the degree of surrendering the King's rights under the threats of filibusters, and in accordance with the advice of those residents, seemingly act-